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devoted to Religion, Philosophy, Mysticism & Science of Yoga

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Prayer to Lord Rudra Shiva

(Stanzawise Translation in English

नमो वन्याय च कक्ष्याय च ॥९॥

I salute the Lord who dwells deep in forests or on its borders.

नमः श्रवाय च प्रतिश्रवाय च ॥१०॥

I salute the Lord who represents the beginning of the Sacrifice as well as its fulfilment.

नम आशुषेणाय चाशुरथाय च ॥१ १॥

I salute the Lord who exists in quick moving armies as well as in quick moving chariots.

नमः शूराय चावभिन्दते च ॥१२॥

I salute the Lord who is brave and who disunites the enemy.

नमः वर्मिणेच वरूथिने च ॥१३॥

I salute the Lord who has a protective cover as well as a protective armour.

नमो बिल्मिने च कवचिने च ॥१४॥

I salute the Lord who wears a helmet as well as a mystical protective cover.

नमः श्रुताय च श्रुतसेनाय च ॥१५॥

I salute the Lord who is known in the Vedas as well as known for his armies.

◆◆◆

Thus Spake Gurudeo ....

Buddha said that what he meant by preaching a doctrine of No soul or Anatta was that the body or the mind or the senses were not the Soul, but that it would be a sacrilege to deny the existence of a spiritual principle. Further, in the Mahaparinibbanasutta we are told how there were two occasions of light or nimbus in the case of Buddha, one at the time of his spiritual illumination, and the other at the time of his passing away. These facts point unmistakably to the Buddha's teaching about the reality of the Self as well as to the mystical experience which the Buddha himself enjoyed.

(from Philosophy of Spirit)

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In a very celebrated poem, Nanak tells us the extreme value of the company of the good. The first chief effect of the company of the Saints, says Nanak, is that it enables us to forget the difference between the Self and the not-self ethically (बिसरगई सब आप पराई), *and therefore meta-physically. There is no enemy and no friend to such a man, no national no foreigner. He belongs to the city of the world, and, for the matter of that, the city of the spiritual world. He would not be satisfied with a mere Cosmopolis, but must be a member of the Theopolis. Another effect of the company of the saints is that it puts in the mind of the aspirant an attitude of reconcilliation with the highest reality - call it Nature or call it God. In the history of thought, we have had many instances to support this reconcilliation between the developing aspirant and the order of nature. All that is good to thee, O Nature, says the great Stoic philosopher, Marcus Aurelius, is good to me. Job in the Old Testament reiterates the same idea in another fashion when he exclaims, ''God hath given, and God hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord''. All prosperity, all adversity, all good and bad happenings in the would take place on account of the will of God.*

(Pathway to God in Hindi Literature P. 57-58)

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EDITORIAL

Body, Mind and Soul

Every one is aware of his own body as well as those of others around him through the perception by the five senses that are provided with the body. Through the perception of these senses, all the animate and inanimate things in the environment of the entire world are in existence for the man. Man's idea of existence is limited to the senses. However. Science has vastly widened the field of perception of the senses through the newer and newer generations of microscopes, telescopes as well as use of various frequencies of X-rays, lasers and masers. The satellites have made it possible to map the horizontal and vertical sections below the surface of the earth as well as the secrets of the distant stars and moons of the farthest planets of our galaxy. Computers have aided the medical science and treatment of diseases to an extent which was unimaginable just a decade back. The contours of river Saraswati described in earliest vedas (i.e. about 20,000 years back) are known through satellite pictures as also the coral ridge below the surface of the sea between India and Srilanka, which was probably used by Hanuman's army to reach the Kingdom of Ravana, whose descendents of today get pension from the Govt, because of their lineage. It is also reported that by means of laser rays the sections of foundation below the Babri mosque show beyond doubt that a temple existed at the place before the mosque was built. Similar is the story of existence and extent of Dwaraka of Shri Krishna. Science is unveiling the history which would take decades for archeological investigations.

It is said that the scientists were doing research about control of atmospheric conditions like gales and floods even during Hitler's time. But the research was given up due to the predominace of nuclear science and the atom bomb. Now the scientists are said to have succeeded in control of atmospheric conditions. like floods, and movements of glaciers through use of high energy masers. It is now in the range of possibility to create floods, gales and quakes in an enemy country. What is described as weapons of war through mental chanting of mantras in Mahabharat war is probably coming into existence through materialistic physical sciences. However, one knows that it is the power of mind that uses the brain and guides all the research efforts. Our scriptures indicate that material progress and heights of the progress of the mind itself are two different things and they do not go together. The Kali Yuga sees the pinnacle of progress of material sciences, while in the Krita or Satya Yuga the progress of the mind itself reaches its highest peak. Before the dawn of Satya Yuga, after Kali Yuga, the world has to undergo greatest of destruction to wipe out the old materialistic corrupted culture in order to usher in the new era.

Even to-day some of the western scientists believe that brain is the seat of the mind. But according to philosophy propounded by the Indian sages, brain which is only a part of the body is a mere instrument at the disposal of the mind which is an abstract entity associated with every individual. It cannot be seen or perceived by the senses but man is aware that he has got a mind which goads activities of the whole body. Sage Vashishhta says mind is the essence of man and constitutes the real man. Though the concentration of the mind is used to find the discoveries and inventions of the material sciences, it is only because it is concentrated and directed towards that end whether it be mechanical engineering, computer science or the medical sciences. It is not directed towards research to the extent of its own powers.

It is only the sages who did so through meditation in a secluded place away from the society. Meditation at its highest point of concentration opened the locks of all secret doctrines and a variety of branches of knowledge which ultimately found the pathway to God and the powers of Omnipresence, Omniscience and Omnipotency. To them, dabbling with material sciences appeared as mere child's play. They found that there are seven different levels of existence for the human being, six of them without the gross bodies. Their memories extended to their past births and could foresee the future. They could see the various deities and gods of Hindu philosophy as centres of powers in the invisible world not seen by the human beings with their gross body senses. Our minds can communicate and appeal to these deities and gods for offer of powers not available in the materialistic world. How to communicate with them ? Through the mantras designed by the various sages. The arrangement of Sanskrit letters and alphabets like Om is done in such a way that when uttered mentally several times they act like masers and reach the minds of the deity and our message is communicated. Of course, for such communications with deities through our minds, the man has necessarily to be morally and mentally disciplined. The deities and gods are always ready to offer the powers to such men who would use the same for the good of the humankind and the world. The yogies say that when one gives a prayer to a deity it reaches that deity without fail if one is sincere, well-meaning and well-disciplined. Through this principle, have emerged the various mantras with single letter like Om to many lettered ones, Sahasranamas (thousand names of God or Goddess), long and short stotras like Rudradhyaya, etc. along with Abhishekas (single continuous drip of water over the idol) or havans and Yadnas or sacrificial fires to help the single point concentration of mind and direct it towards the deity.

The power of the mind is limitless. To use the same for material progress, which stems out of concerns of the body was considered as petty purposes by the sages as the body is afterall a temporary phase and has no eternal value. They aimed at powers of Godhood and devised ways and means to achieve them. The body and the mind are paired together to work for the good of individual. The sages devised a life style combining with religion such that the body develops good habits which in turn disciplimes the mind and the daily rituals of religious worship were such that they would discipline the mind, which in turn, would save the senses from succumbing to the lowly temptations. The aim, however, was to gain predominance of the disciplined mind over the wayward senses of the body.

When Subhashchandra Bose was on his way to Europe in 1935, he had a stop-over in Egypt to the see the Egyptian marvels of pyramids, sphinxes and the still revered temple at Abu Simbel built by Rameses II. Egypt had a thriving ancient civilization, but succumbed to become a coptic christian country by 4th century A.D. and soon after the Arabic incursion in 640 AD, 90% population converted to Islam and 100% was Arabised. The language of pharaonic Egypt spoken for 4000 years is extinct and accompanying literature defunct. Bose's remark was that Egyptians valued their bodies and preserved them well but their soul was lost. Hindus, on the other hand always considered their bodies as ephemeral and cremated them. The barbaric Islamic invasions of medieval times saw many of their temples demolished and mosques built on their sites, but Sanskrit language, epics and scriptures survived and overwhelming majority of Hindus remained Hindus. The Egyptians preserved their bodies but lost their soul; while Hindus lost their bodies but preserved their soul.

The body is ephemeral but the mind is eternal as it goes on accumulating its progress from birth to birth. The brain dies with the body. But the mind with its adjuncts of ego, intellect and consciousness remain alive waiting for the next birth. The mind accumulates its progress till it reaches the supra-mental state and becomes ready for liberation from the cycle of births and deaths. It then finally merges with the soul.

The terms mind and soul are often confused. But the confusion is removed by the oft-repeated example of the tree and the two birds. One bird is sitting right on the top of the tree having the full overall scenic view. The other bird is sitting inside the tree at a lower level. It partakes the fruit of the tree which abound in the surrounding area. The fruit is sometimes good and sometimes bad which is known only after tasting it. The lower bird is the mind which partakes the fruit, that is, it participates in the life activities of the individual. The uppermost top bird is the soul which does not participate in any life activities but only has an overall view. The mind bird has to hop upwards from birth to birth till it takes the topmost position and merges with soul bird liberating the individual from the cycle of birth, once and for all times. Realisation of the Self or liberation from bondage is but merging of the mind with the soul. The individual soul is but a terminal connected with the Supreme Self which can know when the individual is ready for liberation from bondage.

When the mind merges with the soul, activity of the life cycle comes to an end and man is liberated. Realisation of one's soul is concurrent with realisation of The Supreme Self.

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When the aspirant realises the various beings as resting in the One and evolve from the One alone, he attains Brahman. A person who has directly experienced this can alone be called a Realised saint.

- Gurudeo Ranade

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(Continued from last issue)

Eternity Compressed in Time :

My Reminiscences of Shri Gurudeva

Shri Gurudeva has till now discussed the antinomy between Jñāna and Bhakti as propounded by the great Tulsidas in the two opposing सांगरुपकs one from the science of Dairying and the other from the science of Mining. He now comes to two famous poems from Surdas to consider another antinomy between Jnana and Bhakti. However, he prefaces his discussion by recording some misconceptions of the poet-saints of Northern India. He points out that these poet-saints have all misunderstood Uddhava, and most of them have misunderstood the relationship of Gopis and Lord Krishna. In their depiction of the relationship of Gopis and Lord Krishna they have more or less followed the sexual line, and have failed to stress the mystical aspect of that relationship. As Shri Gurudeva puts it, "It is given to women as also to men to have a vision of God, and that is all that the Gopis aimed at, and did achieve in their relationship with Krishna. Secondly, Surdas like other poet-saints, misunderstood Uddhava and represented him as a mere Jnañi or Yogi rather than a Bhakta. Shri Gurudeva recalls the celebrated chapters at the close of the Bhagavata in which Krishna is mentioned as addressing his final words to Uddhava before passing away. Lord Krishna's final words exhibit the highly devotional and mystical relationship between Krishna and Uddhava. Shri Gurudeva asserts that Uddhava was perhaps the greatest devotee that ever lived. In a way, poet-saints including Surdas have done injustice to the memory of Uddhava by putting in his mouth words pertaining to shallow doctrine of mere knowledge.

Coming to the poem of Surdas, 'गोपी सुनहु हरि संदेश', Shri Gurudeva points out that three celebrated doctrines which have been put in the mouth of Uddhava by Surdas are known to every student of Vedantism. Firstly, the Brahman or the highest Reality must be Nirguṇa. It must transcend all qualities; it must transcend pleasure and pain; it must transcend good and evil. Shri Gurudeva remarks that it is such an idea of transcendent Brahman that epistemological Advaitism aims at. The second doctrine is the doctrine of appearance. In words of Surdas, ''The world is an appearance. The five elements are an appearance. The three qualities are an appearance. Form and contour, names and qualities, family and cast, father, mother and consort are all appearances''. In the second poem of Surdas 'ऊधोहमहि न योग सिखैहै', Gopies attack the doctrine of intellectual Vedanta. They tell Uddhava that it is God - Devotion and not mere Yoga or Jnana that is supreme way to God; ''the conception of Nirguna only fills them with sorrow : 'निगुण सुनत दुख पै है'. It is like keeping a crown of dust over their heads instead of interlacing their hair with flowers. Moreover, they have nothing to do with the doctrine of liberation, मुक्तिरहै घर बैठि आपने. Their liberation exists elsewhere. Again they say that knowledge has merely led man to infatuation. We want a practical approach, say the Gopis. Krishna should reveal himself before us, 'आपुन आप

लखैहैं'. Their only concern is to know when that enchanting figure wearing nine brilliant diadems might come back to Gokul. As Shri Gurudeo puts it, "Braja is the alpha and the omega of their life, and they would not tolerate the subsistence of Krishna even for a moment anywhere outside Braja". (Pathway To God in Hindi Literature, pp 113-115).

After discussing the antinomies between Jnana and Bhakti in Tulsidas and Surdas respectively, Shri Gurudeva comes to poem of Tulsidas in which the above antinomies are reconciled. This poem puts forth the eudeamonistic doctrine of Tulsidas, which gives to Jnana the things which belong to Jnana, and to Bhakti the things which belong to Bhakti. In this poem Lord Rama says, "A Bhakta is one who renounces his faith in everything else and places it only in me. The one mark of distinction between the Jnani and the Bhakta is that while Jnani believes in his own powers, the Bhakta believes in mine. ..... I am the constant door-keeper of my devotee. I make it a point to save such a one from dangerous situations as a mother saves her child by withdrawing it instantly from a fire or from a serpent : गह सिसु बच्छ अनत अहि घाई । तहँ राखइ जननी अरगाई ॥'. Tulsidas says, "While a Bhakta might be compared to a young child, the Jnani might be compared to a grown-up son. The mother loves them both. But the latter cannot naturally expect to have her former attention". Finally, we are told by Tulsidas a real Jnani is one whose knowledge is not inconsistent with his Bhakti. Giving a pragmatic justification for this reconciliation between Jnana and Bhakti, Tulsidas tells us that both Jnani and Bhakta being susceptible to temptations, prudence becomes the better part of valour, and a Jnani does not renounce his faith in God. However Shri Gurudeva does not agree with this view of Tulsidas that offers a pragmatic justification for the reconciliation of Jnana and Bhakti. He affirms that there is an intimate inherent relation between Jnana and Bhakti. Bhakti is the ladder which has Jnana as its topmost rung. Jnana "has sprung up from and has grown out of a devoted search after God." If the Jnani kicks off the ladder of Bhakti, the topmost rung of illumination (jnana) attained by him will also crumble to the dust.

Shri Gurudeva then discusses a unique poem of Tulsidas which propounds his new scheme of the nine kinds of Bhakti. We know the famous nine-fold scheme of Bhakti coming down to us from the times of the Bhagavata enunciated in the classical verse :

श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनं ।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनिवेदनं ॥

But Tulsidas differs from this Bhagavata scheme of nine-fold Bhakti.

(to be continued)

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The spiritual pathway is not straight; It is zig-zag; it is spiral. Hence our progress along the path is bound to be spiral.

- Gurudeo Ranade

Mystic Connotation Of The Veda

The vedas have been a source of inspiration to the Indians since times immemorial. Many savants have spent their whole life-time studying the Vedic lore, which may be said to be the bed-rock of our culture. Many attempts have been made by the scholars Eastern as well as Western for a full understanding of the Vedas. They have tried to interpret the Vedic mantras by following certain scientific methods.

In his Nirukta, Yāksha explained certain *mantras* of the Rigveda deriving etymologically the important words therein. He refers to other schools of interpretation existing in his times such as mythological, naturalistic etc. Sāyaṇa wrote a commentary, which proved to be of great help to the later scholars in the field of Vedic exegesis. There are also other commentaries written by Skandasvāmin, Veṅkatamādhava, Mādhava and Mudgal. Madhvācārya has written a commentary on the first forty hymns of the RIGVEDA. His commentary is in verse.

Western scholars like Max Muller, Oldenberg, Grassmann, Roth, Ludwig, Geldner, Louis Renou and

Gonda followed a critical and comparative method for understanding the Vedic texts. In India Dayānanda Sarasvati, Dr. Raghu Vira, Dr. V. S. Agrawal, Dr. Surya Kanta, Prof. H.D. Velankar, Dr. Sampurnananda, Shri S.D. Satavalekar and Vishvabandhu Shastri have rendered yeomen service to the cause of Vedic interpretation, and now a number of scholars, like Dr. R. N. Dandekar, are showing the way to be followed by young scholars.

Shri Aurobindo had altogether a different approach to the Vedas. He thinks that the Vedic gods are psychological and not material in their functions. In the Foreword to his book *Hymns to the Mystic Fire* he writes (p. iv) :- ''This change was eidently due to a cultural development in those early peoples, who became progressively more mentalised and less engrossed in physical life; as they advanced in civilization and needed to read into their religion and their deities finer and subtler aspects which would support their more highly mentalised concepts and interests and find for them a true spiritual being or some celestial figure as their support and sanction''.

The Vedas are *apauruṣeya* in the sense that the *mantras* in them were 'Revealed' to the Vedic seers when they were in deep meditation and concentration. The seers are called Satya-śrutaḥ i.e. the hearers of truth. Thus they were the perceivers and not the composers of those hymns. Hence the word ṛṣi is explained as one who has the divine vision (ṛṣiḥ darśanāt). The *mantras* impress the mind, purify and strengthen it and thus protect an individual.

Hence a *mantra* is that which protects a man when he ponders over it (mananāt trāyate iti mantraḥ). Thus the *mantras* have mystical power.

The *mantras* were inspired from deeper planes of consciousness and contain secret knowledge. They couch the Vedic mysticism which can be understood by following a proper method. The *mantras* contain a universal message which gives expression to the Yogic experience of the Vedic seers and contain a secret meaning couched in symbolic language. The words therein have an esoteric significance which can be really understood by the initiated. To the ordinary man the Saṁhitās speak in terms of health, wealth, heroic progeny, victory and long life and to the spiritually evolved person they symbolically indicate the mystic truth which was taught through the Upaniṣads. Symbology helps to solve many a riddle which scholars have not been able to understand and which they have often misinterpreted.

The hymns addressed to the various powers in Nature are symbolic of the Highest Reality in its diverse aspects. They teach, on the one hand, the religion of faith and forms to the seeker who is at the initial stage and, on the other, they teach the philosophy of sublime unity to the seeker who is advanced. It is needless to say that the Vedic seer who declared - "The Lord of this (world) who is in the highest heaven, he knows (the origin of this universe), or perhaps he too knows is not (Rigveda X. 29.7) was a great seeker of truth. Yo asyādhyakṣaḥ parame vyoman so aṅga veda yadi vā na veda. It is equally evident that the seer who said the following was a realised soul : "I have known the great Puruṣa, who is bright like the Sun and beyond darkness. By knowing him only, a man overcomes death. There is no other path leading to salvation (Vājasaneya Saṁhita 31.18)

Vedāhaṁetam puruṣaṁ mahāṅtaṁ
ādityavarṇaṁ tamasaḥ parastāt
tameva viditvā atimṛtyumetī
nānyaḥ paṅthā vidyate' yanāya

There is one *mantra* in the Rigveda which clearly indicates that the Vedic ṛks have an esoteric and mystic connotation. The *mantra* runs as follows :-

ṛco akṣare parame vyoman
yasmin devā adhi viśve niśedhuḥ
yastanna veda kimṛcā kariṣyati
ya it tadvidusta ime sāmāsate

RV. I 164-39

The ṛks are in the imperishable highest heaven where all the Gods have resided. What shall he, who does not know this, do with the ṛk ? Those who know this are happy."

This shows that an empirical understanding of the mere words is of no use. The real meaning belongs to a very high plane of consciousness and is intelligible to the initiates only, who are able to reach those heights. The learned men who understand the hidden meaning attain bliss.

There are other *mantras* relating to Soma which point out that Soma does not merely refer to the juice which is to be drunk. Soma is said to be placed in the heaven; and in the lap of the Nakṣatras (RV. X85-1-2). An interesting mantra is :

somaṁ manyate papivān
yat saṁpiṣantyoṣadhiṁ
somaṁ yaṁ brahmāṇo vidur
na tasyāśnāti kaścana

RV. X 85.3

One considers soma as a drink, as they press the herb. But none can partake of the Soma which the Bṛāhmaṇas know.

Thus the vedic words refer to something that is beyond the objects which they denote. This is true in the case of Agni who is called purohita, ṛtvik, hotṛ and the best bestower of wealth. The Ghṛta which is offered to Agni, should also refer to something different from the clarified butter. The description of Sarasvati at most motherly (ambitame), best godess (devitame) and the inspirer of all that is true and noble shows it refers to something beyond the physical river.

Dr. V. S. Agrawal in his book *Sparks from the Vedic Fire says* -'"The language of the Rigveda is not to be traced in the lexical mould of apparent words and meaning. It is essentially the language of symbol-phonemes, designed to explain the mystical working of the cosmos on the parallel planes of Life (Prāna), Mind (Manas) and Matter (Vāk). These are know as the Three Brothers of Agni, or equivalent to the seven sons of Aditi, who is the great Mother Goddess or Infinite Nature. The seers speak mystically, for the Gods love the mystic.

(Parokṣa priyā iva hi devāh).

Sri. Autobindo was himself a great mystic. He had certain deep spiritual experiences. Hence he could interpret the truth which the Vedic seers had visualised. In his book *Hymns to Mystic Fire* he says "Some of the sūktas are plain and almost modern in their semblance, others baffle us at first by their semblance of antique obscurity. But these differences of manner take nothing from the unity of spiritual experience, nor are they complicated by any variation of the fixed terms and the common formulae. In the deep and mystic style of Dīrghatamas Aucathya as in the melodious lucidity of Medhātithi Kāṇva, in the puissant and energetic hymns of Viśvāmitra, as in Vaśiṣṭa's even harmonies, we have the same firm foundation of knowledge and the same scrupulous adherence to the sacred conventions of the Initiates".

Twentyfive hymns in the first Maṇḍala (140-164) are ascribed to Dīrghatamas and these are supposed to contain a mystic sense. Shri M. B. Panta of Pune has published a book in Marāthi (Dīraghatmas āṇi Sūrya) in which he has interpreted two of these hymns (140-141) showing that they refer to certain scientific aspects of the Sun. In the appendix he has pointed out that the famous hymn starting with the words asya vāmasya(164) tells us through symbols the distance between the earth and the Sun, the distance between the earth and the nearest star, the diameter of the earth, the speed of the revolution of the earth around the Sun, rate of acceleration due to gravity, the diameter of the Sun, and the temperature of the Sun's surface.

The fact that the Universe is a mystery has been expressed in a hymn addressed to Savitṛ :-

tisro dyāvaḥ saviturdvā upasthāñ
ekā yamasya bhuvane virāṣāṭ
āṇim na rathyammṛtādhi tasthur
iha bravītu ya u tacchiketat. Rv. I. 35.6

"There are three heavens; two are the laps of Savitṛ. One overcoming men is in the abode of Yama. Immortal things rest on him as on the axle-end of chariot. Let him, who may understand this, tell it here". Here is an enigma which indicates that the totality of the cosmos is beyond the ken of man.

Some scholars have pointed out to the symbolic meaning of the hymn relating to the dialogue between Saramā and Paṇīs. The cows that are stolen represent the divine knowledge that has become obscure due to materialism. The knowledge can be restored only through unflinching devotion, sincerity, faith and honest effort, as put in by Saramā.

Thus we find that the *Veda-mantras* have esoteric and mystic cannotation, which can be understood through a substained study, only if we are able to enter into the mood of the Vedic seers through proper Sadhanā.

- Dr. B. R. Modak

(Paper read by late Dr. B.R. Modak in Pensylvania University at Philadelphia University in USA in the Sixth Sanskrit International Conference.)

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A Functional Analysis Of Religion From Merton's Perspective

Robert K. Merton (1910) is an erudite American functional sociologist. He makes the distinction between Manifest and Latent functions on the basis of certain purposes and points out the differences between Functions, Dysfunctions, Non-functions and questions the postulates of traditional functionalism[1]. The basic objective of this paper is to analyse religion from all these and some other related angles.

According to Merton (1968:105). ''Manifest functions are those objective consequences contributing to the adjustment or adaptation of the system which are intended and recognized by participants in the system; Latent functions, correlatively being those which are neither intended nor recognized.'' In other words, manifest functions are obvious and evident functions which are accepted by the members of a given social system. Latent functions are not obvious like manifest functions and hence deliberate efforts ought to be made by sociologists to find them out. They have to go beyond the common perception of the participants and observe the latent functions. The distinction between manifest and latent functions has been made on the basis of various purposes which at times overlap and shade into each other.

One of the important purposes of the distinction between manifest and latent functions is to indicate what appears ''irrational'' can become meaningful. Merton uses the Hopi rain dance to illustrate the point. The manifest function of rain dance is to bring rain. However, such ceremonies fulfil the latent function of reinforcing the group identity by providing a periodic occasion on which the scattered members of a group assemble to enagage a common activity (Vide for details Merton 1968 : 118-19).

Generally, we are satisfied with manifest functions of religion and do not look into their hidden consequences. But sociologists dive deep into the hidden meanings of religious practices, beliefs and myths. There seems to be an automatic association of myths with religion. Though religious myths appear to be illogical, meaningless and absurd, they strengthen various ideals that are desirable to society. For instance, myths - like the Hindu Kalpas[2] suggest constructive and destructive aspects of life and are therefore part of a process that reconciles opposites in a perpetual cycle of mutual need - one state anticipating another. Almost all cultures have their formulative period prior to progression toward some kind of climax and then process starts again with a renewal (vide for details Forty 1999:24)

Now, it can be seen how the analysis of latent functions of religion can expand the realm of sociological knowledge. Some of the religious rites, rituals are very expensive. The basic question is why do some people spend their money lavishly over performance of rituals or give alms and food and costly articles etc., in the name of religion. After examining minutely the latent functions of religion, it may be stated that quite a few persons if not all indulge in such activities to affirm or enhance their social position.

In any society telling lies is 'immoral'. Yet when it is observed through the lens of latent functions it may no more look 'immoral'. For instance, the founder of Nimbargi Sampradaya gives no doubt the utmost importance to the virtue of truth. However, he points out that this inexorable rule is subject to one exception, viz., one may utter falsehood, even at one's risk for securing benefit to others, e.g., to save some one's life (vide for details Jamkhandi 1978:30-31). Thus, the established religious and moral virtues get challenged when they are scrutinized from the view point of latent functions.

We have hitherto dealt with the distinction between manifest and latent functions of religion on the basis of four purposes. Hereafter, the attention can be focussed on the analysis of functions and dysfunctions of religion and also on some other related aspects such as latent dysfunctions and non-functions of religion.

Merton (1968:105) writes, "Functions are those observed consequences which make for the adaptation or adjustment of a given system; dysfunctions are those observed consequences which lessen the adaptation or adjustment of the system'. In the opinion of Merton 'function' is to be differentiated from purpose. A purpose is something in the mind of the participant or participants in a given social system. But a function (or dysfunction) is an objective consequence of action ... Motives are, of course, never irrelevant to action, but they are not the same thing as function or dysfunction. It must be noted that the distinctions between manifest and latent functions, and functions and dysfunctions are relative and not absolute. What is functional for one system may become dysfunctional[3] to another system. To illustrate the point the following example can be given.

Religion provides authoritative teaching. This is its priestly function. It contributes to security and order. The dysfunctional aspect of the priestly function is that it may sacralize (make sacred) incorrect ideas and backward attitudes. This may have a harmful effect on a society's understanding of its environment and efforts to control nature. The trial of Galileo for the ''crime'' of suggesting that the earth revolved around the sun is an example of this kind of effect (Spencer 1979:375).

Merton clearly states that a latent function is one type of unanticipated consequence, one that is functional for the designated system. Latent functions may support the manifest functions. The latent functions of religious institutions in the modern society include offering recreational activities and courtship opportunities to young people. All Church leaders agree that these activities assist churches pursue their manifest functions.

Further, Merton indicates that there are two other types of unanticipated consequences : "those that are dysfunctional for a designated system, and these comprise the latent dysfunctions", and "those which are irrelevant to the system which they affect neither functionally nor dysfunctionally ... non-functional consequences" (Ritzer 1988:100). The examples of latent dysfunction and non-function of religion are cited below.

In many cases, religious groups formed in defiance of and in protest against the caste system, have found themselves relegated into the position of castes in that system which they have aspired to reform. A typical instance of religious sect turned caste is that of the Lingayats, a caste which started as the followers of Basava, a teacher of the twelfth century who preached the repudiation of caste (Hutton 1963:117-18). Thus, the latent (dys) function can undermine manifest function.

There is the empirical possibility of non-functional consequences which are irrelevant to the system under consideration (Merton 1968:105). One example of non-function of religion, although a few might disagree, is the Women's Christian Temperance Movement (Ritzer 1988:97). With this one cannot say that Merton's analysis of functionalism is complete. In view of this it is desirable to pay our attention to his refutations and modifications of the postulates of traditional functionalism. These postulates of traditional functionalism are : (i) Functional Unity of Society; (ii) Universal functionalism; (iii) Indispensability.

The first postulate of the functional unity of society states that any part of the social system is functional for the entire system. All parts of society are seen to work together for the maintenance and integration of society as a whole. Merton argues that particularly in complex highly differentiated societies, this 'functional unity' is doubtful. He provides the example of religious pluralism to illustrate this point. In a society with a variety of faiths, religion may tend to divide rather than unite. Merton argues that functional unity is a matter of degree. Its extent must be determined by investigation rather than simply beginning with the assumption that it exists. The idea of functional unity implies that a change in one part of the system will automatically result in a change in other parts. Again Merton argues that this is a matter of investigation. It should not simply be assumed at the outset. He suggests that in highly differentiated societies, institutions may well have a high degree of 'functional autonomy'. Thus a change in a particular institution may have little or no effect on others (Haralambos 1980:530). For instance, most of the important centres of Nimbargi Sampradaya like Kaneri Math - Siddhagiri, Sri S.S. Guralinga Jangam Maharajar Mandir Ramashram - Devar Nimbargi, Sri Raghunath Priya Sadhu Maharaj Math - Chimmad, Shri Kshetra Inchageri - Inchageri, Kaivalya Dham - Sangli, S. S. Prabhakar Swami Maharaj Mandir - Solapur, Shri Gurudev Ranade Ashram, Nimbal (R.S.) appear to be autonomous and a change in a particular centre may have a very little or no effect on the other centres.

Merton refers to the second assumption as the postulate of Universal functionalism'. As per this assumption all standardized social or cultural forms have positive functions. Merton argues that every aspect of the social sytem performs a positive function is not only premature, it may well be incorrect. He suggests that functionalist analysis should proceed from the assumption that any part of society may be functional, dysfunctional or non-functional. In addition, the units for which a particular part is functional, dysfunctional or non-functional must be clearly specified. These units may be individuals, groups or society as a whole (Haralambos 1980:530-31). Thus the tickets that are sold out to have a ''Special Seeing'' (Vishesha Darshan) of the deities in some of the famous temples to avoid a long queue may be seen as ''dysfunctional'' for the poor devotees but ''functional'' for those devotees who can afford to pay for the tickets.

Merton's third criticism is directed towards the 'postulate of indispensibility'. This assumption states that certain institutions or social arrangements are indispensable to society. Functionalists have often seen religion in this light. For example Davis and Moore claim that religion 'plays a unique and indispensable part in society'. Merton questions this assumption of indispensability arguing that the same functional prerequisities may be met by a range of alternative institutions (Haralambos 1980:531). If social integration is the funtion of the religion, this functin could be served by a powerful and efficient government. If the salvation is the function served by religion , a simple system of faith would do, and the heterogeneity of numerous form cannot be easily explained. Therefore, Merton introduces complimentary concepts such as ''functional alternatives'', ''functional equivalents'' or ''functional substitutes''.

Thus, Merton's functional analyis is brilliant. But it cannot be free from criticisms. Quite a few criticisms against his functional analysis are levelled. We shall, however, mention only two criticisms that are worthy of our consideration.

Functionalists like Merton simply concentrate on the consequences of actions and neglect the meanings that individuals give to their actions.

What is a manifest function for one may be a latent function for another. However, this distinction between manifest and latent functions is significant because it calls our attention to latent functions that are apt to be overlooked in the analysis.

Needless to add in the end that the above criticisms made against Merton's functional analysis in a general way can also be applied to the functional analysis of religion from Merton's perspective.

NOTES :

1. Functionalism is said to do two things most commonly - to relate the parts of society to the whole and to relate one part to another.
2. Kalpa is a day and night of Brahma, 4,320,000,000 years.
3. The concept 'functional' does not necessarily mean good nor does 'dysfunctional' mean bad. What is good for one system may be considered bad for another system.

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> *The problem facing man is the integration of his personality, the development of a divine existence in which the spiritual principle has the mastery over all the powers of soul and body. This integral life is created by the spirit. The distinction between soul and body which links man with the life of nature is not an ultimate one. The life of soul permeates the life of the body, even as the bodily life has its effect on the soul. There is a vital unity of body and soul in man. In the integrated personality, we have the victory of the spirit over nature, of freedom over necessity.*
>
> *- Dr. S. Radhakrishnan*

Theory Of Knowledge According To Visisṭādvaita

The system of philosophy expounded by Sri Rāmānuja is called *Visistādvaita.* Ramanuja, according to the tradition, was born in 1017 A.D. at Sriporumbudur near the modern city of Chennai and expired in 1137 A.D. at Srirangam. Often the term ''Visistadvaita'' is translated into English as 'Qualified Non-dualism' or 'Qualified Monism' which means ''God, qualified (Visista) by the world of Souls and Matter, is non-dual (Advaita)''.

The term Advaita (Non-dualism) emphasises the openess of the Ultimate Reality. Though all schools of thought upholding monism agree that the Ultimate Reality is one, they differ widely from one another when it comes to determining the sense in which Reality is one. The fundamental problem of monism is to account for the world of plurality as well as the infinite number of souls. The issue with which a monist is confronted is: how does the 'one' become 'many' and how is the one Reality related to the manifold universe of matter and spirit ? Śaṇkara says world is not real but a phenomenal appearance of Ultimate Reality. However, for Ramanuja, the Ultimate Reality, though one, is not the Absolute without any differentiation since such a transcendental undifferentiated being is inconceivable and logically untenable.

Accordingly, Ramanuja acknowledges three fundamental real entities : matter *(acit)* soul *(cit)* and God *(Iśwara)*. On the basis of the principle of organic relation he upholds that Ultimate Reality is one as a unity. *Iswara* is the Creator of the Universe and *cit* and *acit* depend on *Iswara* for their very existence and are organically related to *Iswara* in the same way as the physical body is related to the soul. The oneness of Reality is to be understood not in the sense of absolute identity but as an organic unity. Vadanta Desika stresses this point when he says, Brahman alone, who is organically related to the entire *cit* and *acit,* is the one Ultimate Reality. Though there is absolute difference between *Iswara* and the two other reals and also among the individual souls and matter, the Ultimate Reality s considered as one because as an organic unity it is one. .n this sense, the system of Vedanta expounded by Sri. Ramanuja is described as Visistadvaita.

Thoery of Knowledge :

Theory of knowledge occupies an important place in Visistadvaita Vedanta. 'The main reason for giving such a great importance to this theory is to remove the confusion caused by various schools of thought' says Vedantadesika. Desika uses different terms such as *Buḍdhi, Saṁvit, Prajña,* etc., while referring to *Jñāna* or knowledge. All these are synonymous and mean the same thing in Vedānta System. After a critical evaluation of the theory of knowledge, Ramanuja seeks to present a theory of knowledge, which is in conformity with the *Upanishadic* teaching and common experience.

Three important points have to be taken into consideration while examining the theory of knowledge. The first and most important one is the nature of knowledge, that is, knowledge in relation to the subject. The second point is knowledge in relation to external objects. The third one in the means of knowledge and their validity.

Knowledge as an attribute of Jīva :

According to the Visistadvaita, knowledge which is known as *Jñana,* or *buḍḍhi* is an attritube of *Jiva.* It always belongs to and exists for the Self. Hence, it is called *Dharmabhūtajñāna* or attributive knowledge. Here *Jñana* or knowledge is understood as that which reveals an object. Knowledge reveals the object whereas a material object cannot do so. The function of knowledge is, therefore, revelation or manifestation of something that lies outside its purview. Knowledge is comparable to a light, which reveals the presence of an object but does not know it. That which knows but does not reveal the objects outside it except itself is technically known as *Pratyak.* This is the characteristic feature of the self. That which only reveals to the self but does not know what it reveals is described as *Parak.* Knowledge is of this kind. Knowledge, in other words, reveals the object always for the knowing subject; the self on the other hand, cannot reveal the objects but knows what is revealed to it by knowledge. This is the fundamental distinction between the self and the knowledge. Thus, knowledge is like the light; the self is like the lamp and the *dharmabhutajnana* is like rays. The *Jiva* is eternal and immutable, as established by *Sruti* texts and as such, it cannot undergo any modification, whereas knowledge is subject to constant modification, as is warranted by our experience. Knowledge manifests itself when it comes into contact with the objects through mind and sense organs and it ceases to function whenever it is not in contact with any object.

The Upanishadic texts state that self is the knower. Based on the Upanishadic teaching the Vedanta Sutra also affirms that *Jivatma* is knower or *Jñatā*. According to Sri Ramanuja, the relation of *Jiva* to knowledge is comparable to the flame and its luminosity. They are distinct but not physically separable. As substance and attribute are distinct but inseparable, it is logical to regard *Jñana* as an essential and inseparable attribute of Jiva.

Knowledge as Self-luminous :

Knowledge is self-luminous. That means, knowledge reveals itself as well as the object. It is described as *svayaṁprakasa,* which means, according to Visistadvaitin, knowledge at the time of revealing an object does not require to be manifested by another knowledge. The existence of external objects becomes known to us through knowledge. In other words, knowledge, when it reveals an object, does not require another knowledge to reveal itself. If that were the case then it would lead to the fallacy of infinite regress.

Knowledge has the capacity to do two functions simultaneously viz., revelation of itself as well as the object, like lamp. On the basis of the same principle, self-luminosity of knowledge is justified.

Knowledge as Eternal :

Visistadvaitin maintains that knowledge as an essential attribute of the self is also permanent. It means that an essential attribute which is inseparable from its substrate will have to be admitted as permanent in so far as, the latter to which it belongs is also permanent. The individual self is Eternal so also the knowledge, which is inseparably related to it. The Upanishad says 'The knowledge of the self does not have destruction'.

Smriti text also reiterates the eternal character of knowledge. Visnudharma says that 'Just like the lustre of a diamond which is covered with dirt is not created but only made manifest by removing the dirt, knowledge which is *Atmaguna* is not created, it exists eternally as an inseparable dharma of Self !' Here the lustre of the diamond remains permanently with the diamond since the two are inseparable. Even it is eclipsed temporarily due to dirt, it is not lost but only eclipsed. In the same way knowledge is not something which arises as a product (as Nyaya-Vaisesika believes) but it exists as a permanent attribute of Self.

According to Vedanta Desika though knowledge is one and permanent for each individual, the knowledge of each person is different from that of others because the *Jivas* to which they pertain are different. Here the modifications which come and go are non-permanent but the *Jñana* to which they belong and which is the substrate for them is permanent or *Nitya.*

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> *There is a spiritual triple confluence. God, devotee and Nama form the triple confluence. Of them, two are visible like Ganga and Yamuna and one is invisible like Saraswati. Normally devotee and Nama are manifest and God is unmanifest, hidden. In the second stage devotee and God (his form) are manifest and Nama is hidden. While in the third stage, Nama and God are manifest and devotee goes underground. When devotee merges in the Lord, God and Nama alone remain. This is confluence of a higher stage.*
>
> *- Gurudeo Ranade*

An Earnest Appeal to God

[The Kannada Poem composed by the Saint of Nimbargi
in the Devanagari Script)

नोयिसि नुडिदन्याके ॥ श्री बलभीमा ॥प.॥
नोयिसि नुडिदनु दोष माडिदेनेनु ॥
क्लेश हरिसो एन्न भासि पालिप देवा ॥अ.प.॥
दासन दास नानु ॥ केशवस्वामी ॥ करूणदि कायो एन्ननु ॥
एनू इल्लदे याके एन्न ॥ शब्दशस्त्रदिंद होडेद ॥
सोसि न्यायव माडो वासुदेव नीनु ॥१॥
कल्लनु मरेगोंडेया ॥ करूणाकरा ॥ ब्रीदव एल्लिट्टिया ॥ अल्लमप्रभु निम्म
॥ सन्निधविरूवेनु ॥
कल्लु ओडेदु नरसिंहा कडेगे बारो ॥२॥
धरेयोळु धन्यवाद ॥ निंबरगि ग्राम ॥
वासुळ्ळ भीमा नीनु ॥ गुरुलिंगजंगम चिन्मयरूपने ॥
तनु-मन-धन निम्म चरणकर्पितो देवा ॥३॥

Why did he gash me by fierce words
O *Bhima,* the mightiest ?

What wrongs have I done
To vex me so by cutting words ?
Relieve me from the affliction at once

O God, the saviour of the distress'd;
Why, why did he gash me by fierce words ?

The most humble servant of God, am I,
Rear me with compassion O *Keshava;*
Why did he for no reason, smite me by
Piercing words ? Do even-justice O *Vasudeva;*
Why, why did he gash me by fierce words ?

Aren't you ashamed to hide behind the stone image ?
O *Karunakara,* where is your honour ?
I have come to you, O *Prabhu Allama;*
Break out of the stone O *Narasimha*
Why, why did he gash me by fierce words ?

The place *Nimbargi* on the earth, truly the most bless'd,
Which you have made your abode !
I surrender to you O *Gurulinga Jangama,*
At your feet, my body-wealth-and-mind;
Why, why did he gash me by fierce words ?

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Man is a complex multi-dimensional being, including within him different elements of matter, life, consciousness, intelligence and the divine spark.

- Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

Brahman In Milesian And Eleatic Philosophy

ABSTRACT

The Vedas, the earliest literary documents of Indo-european origin were known since time immemorial by the Hindu Brahmins. The vedic gods preside over natural phenomena. They have no specific characteristics like the Greek gods do or as the Puranas. There were many gods who were in charge of rain, thunder, lightning. But in the Olympian religion of the Greeks it was always Zeus who was responsible for the above forces. Out of the conception of a plurality of vedic gods arose the notion of one greatest god. This god was called Brahman. He was the sole creator of the universe. In striking contrast were the Olympian gods who were not creators of the universe but conquerors. A controversy arose in Greece around the 6th century B.C. against the traditional Olympian religion and the cosmogonical explanations offered for the origin of the universe. This trend was most conspicuous among the Ionians of Asia Minor who were in close contact with the Indians and the Persians. There is a comparison between the Upanishads and the Greek teachings of philosophy. The purpose of this paper is to examine the concept of Brahman in relation to

the philosophical explanation of the Milesians and the Eleatics.

The word Brahman is derived from ''br'' which means 'to grow''. The universe and its components were grown out of Brahman. It is mentioned in the Mundaka Upanishad that :

''As the sparks from the well-kindled fire,
In nature akin to it spring forth in their thousand
So my dear sir, from the imperishable,
Living beings of many kinds go forth,
And again return to Him.

(1.1.7.)

On a similar footing Thales, the earliest known Greek philosopher and the pioneer Milesian, taught that all things originated from water and went back to water. It was an everlasting process. Water is a material substance unlike the quasi-rational explanations offered by the poets and cosmogonists. But Brahman is not material. Brahman is ''that which is inaudible, intangible, invisible, indestructible which cannot be tasted, nor smelt, eternal, without beginning or end, greater than the great, the fixed'' (Katha Upanishad, 111.15). The idea that the world arose out of the primeval waters was known by the Greeks before Thales. There is reference to Ocenus and Tethys as parents of generation (Aristotle, Metaphysics, xxi. 19b) and the influence of Egypt where the Nile flooded and caused new life (Plutarch, Isis et Osiris, 34). No doubt these ideas influenced Thales to determine that water was the primary substance and the germ of all life. Reference to a similar trend in the pre-Upanishadic period is in the Rigveda :

> *"darkness there was at first in darkness hidden,*
> *The universe was indistinguished water".*
>
> *(x. 129).*

An attempt to search for an underlying identity in the universe was put forth by Thales in the form of an arche or substratum, the principle of water. Brahman causes life just as water of Thales does.

Aristotle notes that Thales identified soul or life with the power of motion (De Anima, 1.405 a 19). There is a soul in all organic and inorganic things. It was this power that causes motion. This power is attributed divine qualities by the use of the term "god". Thales presents it in the light of a divine power that generates life. This divine power is the moist element in nature. Thales successfully puts across his teachings to the contemporary Greeks who recognized "god" as a vital source of power. Corresponding to this idea the Chandogya Upanishad records that the world is made of both organic and inorganic substances or of jiva and ajiva. All organic things have souls (vi. 11). Soul or atman is the inner self of man whereas Brahman is the exterior source of the universe. The fusion of atman with Brahman is fervently sought after by the Hindu ascetics in the state of jivanmukthi. Indian philosophy is conspicuous in identifying the outer reality with the inner. This identification completes the philosophical need to seek the one reality in the universe - Brahman. The Greeks of the time of Thales were content to remain with the physical reality (Aristotle, Metaphysics, A 98 3 B 20). Water is physical. It quenched the thirst of knowledge of the primal substance out of which the world arose and to which it returned.

The importance of Thales lies in his simple attempt to establish one underlying source that creates all life - water. There is a divine power that permeats the generation of all beings. Thales calls this power ''god''. It is equal to Brahman for both are sources of power, that cause the origin of the universe and its components.

The next in the line of the Milesians, Anaximander, taught that the world originated from the Apeiron or the Boundless. The Apeiron is called divine for it is indestructible, imperishable and deathless. All elements, earth, air, water, fire generate as a result of a vortex-like motion within the Apeiron while the Apeiron is itself unchanged (Simplicius, Physics, 150.22 Theophrastus, Physics, 24.13, Aristotle, Physics, 1, 4, 187 20). All things are composed out of the Apeiron while it remains the same. The Chandogya Upanishad records the essence of all things as Brahman which is similar to the Apeiron. For e.g. if a clay pot is stripped of all its characteristics and qualities nothing will remain except the earth which remain absolute and unchanged. Similarly if all the qualities of anything are stripped, only the absolute essence, the Apeiron will be left. Unlike Thales' water, the Apeiron cannot be seen. It is similar to what the Mundaka Upanishad notes of Brahman :

''what is invisible, intangible, colourless, nameless, eyeless and earless, devoid of hands and of feet, that is what is coeval with time and space is all-prevading, subtle

and changeless which the wise know to be the source of beings".

(1.1.6).

Just as the Apeiron causes the four elements so does Brahman. First it caused fire, water and earth (Chandogya Upanishad, vi. 2, 3, 4) while ether was added to the above (Taittiriya Upanishad 11.1).

Brahman is identified with prāna or the vital breath. On it depends all life (Aithereya Upanishad Veda, xi.iv). Prana corresponds to the primary substance of Anaximenes air. It is like water and Apeiron - the source which cause the generation of all life and that to which all things go back. (Aristotle, Metaphysics, 984 a 5, Hipplytus, a 7). The similarity between prāna and air is suggested when Aetius notes "just as our soul which is air holds us together, so breath and air surround the whole cosmos" (1, 3, 4, B 2). Anaximenes offers a natural explanation for the substance of the world order. The process of rarefaction and condensation is a natural process by which the world came into being. Rarefied air becomes fire. Condensed it becomes wind, cloud, water, earth and stones (Aristotle, Physics, 24.26, A 5).

The idea that there is a parallel between the individual and the universe associate the teachings of the Upanishads. Prana is vital in yogic meditation for on it depends bodily postures which lead the Hindu ascetic towards the acquisition of emancipation. On the other hand prana associates āditi or the Boundless. Āditi or the Boundless is identified with "whatever has been or whatever shall be'' (Rg Veda, 1.89.10) Aditi as the absolute source of all life corresponds with Anaximander's Apeiron. Ākāsa or ether which originates from Brahman corresponds to Anaximenes' air. There is no difference between ātman or prāna and space, akāsa. Apeiron is similar to akasa, for it is boundless. The prāṇāyāma atman or the vital breath is what exists beyond our sense organs. It is what holds us together. So it corresponds to Anaximenes' air. It is all the more important for the Hindu ascetic for on it depends the unbreakable link between his own prana or atman and the essence of the entire universe, Brahman.

The philosophical theories of the Eleatic School correspond with the concept of the one as against the many, or Brahman or the one. According to its pioneer, Xenophanes, God is one and not many (Fr. 23). He ''sees as a whole'' (Fr. 24) and ''always remains'' (Fr. 26). God is a source of virtue and Xenophanes is against Homer and Hesiod who have presented the Olympian gods in the light of mean characters (Fr. 11, 12). Corresponding to this God of xenophanes is Brahman who ''is not great by good deeds nor low by eveil deeds but it is he makes one do good deeds whom he wants to raise and makes him commit bad deed whom he wants to lower down'' (Kausitaki Upanishad, 3.9). There is slight difference here because the God of Xenophanes is impersonal Brahman.

Parmenides, the next in the line of the Eleatics, takes the idea of the one God a step further. According to Parmenides the world is everchanging and nothing is ''is''.

The "isness" is a characteristic of the Being of Parmenides. It itself is changeless and remains changeless amidst all that is transcendental. Nothing comes out of nothing - ex nihilo nihil fit. Similarly Being cannot rise out of non-being. It is self-identical. Brahman corresponds very beautifully with the Being of Parmenides, for both Brahman and Being are the only existent factors in the illusionary world. Brahman is the antaryamyanrtah or the machine that interconnects all things (Brhadaranyaka Upanishad iv.4.23). Knowledge of Brahman emerges from the eradication of māyā, illusion and avidyā, ignorance which are cospicuous in the teachings of Sankara. They are the obstacles in the acquisition of jñana or wisdom. Closely inkeeping with the teachings of Parminedes Being are the following lines regarding the purest of all being, the purest of all intelligence, Brahman :

"Just as a lump of salt when put in water will disappear in it and it cannot be taken out seperately but in whatever portion of water we taste we find salt, so Maitreyi, does this great reality infinite and limitless consisting only of pure intelligence manifesting itself in all these (phenomenal existences) vanish in them and there is then no phenomenal knowledge"

(Brhadaranyaka Upanishad 11.4.12).

When the pure being dissolves into itself it is a state of absolute being, unique in its own significance.

The Being of Parmenedies is an abstract concept. It can only be grasped by reason. It is deciscively different from the Milesian explanations of the origin of the universe. Water, Apeiron and air are natural substances. But Being is a progressive concept not only from the Milesian views but also from the radical argument of Xenophanes against the anthropomorphism of the Olympian gods and the determination of a single entity amidst a plurality of gods. Being surpasses all these previous theories. Knowledge of Being lies only in the realization of reason amidst illusion. Positive definition of both Brahman and the Being lies only in the realization of reason amidst illusion. Positive definition of both Brahman and the Being Parmentides are impossible. The Brahadaranyaka Upanishad records that,

> *"Ātman is not this, nor this, nor neti neti. He is inconceivable for he cannot be conceived, unchangeable for he is not changed, untouched for nothing touches him, he cannot suffer by a stroke of the sword, he cannot suffer any injury"*
>
> *(iv. 5. 15).*

Brahman is *asat* or non-Being. Brahman is being as well, yet it cannot be understood by ordinary perception. Therefore it is non-Being. The same is applied to the Being of Parmeneides.

The knowledge of Brahman reaches its peak in the state of tat tvam asi - that thou art (Chandogaya Upanishad, vi. viii.7). This is when one is being one with the pure being, Brahman or the pure bliss, saccidananda and the light of all lights, jyotisam jyotih. Union with Brahman was sought after by the Hindus in a way the Greeks never experienced even in their mysteries. Although the Greek philosophical arguments differ from the deep rooted religious significance of the Upanishads and the Vedas they were attempting to provide a rational and thought provoking explanation for the origin of the universe. In this attempt the Greeks were in keeping with the Hindu concept, Brahman.

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◆◆◆

Shri Gurudeo Ranade's Grace

through incidents in my life

On the occasion of my sister Mrs. Vathsala's marriage (1945), I had been to Shri Babasaheb Sangoram at Athani with family members. It is there that I had the first glimpse of Gurudeo's grace.

In the year 1947, Mrs. Vathsala (my sister) had severe burn injury at Jabalpur. I was summoned to attend her as well as her one year old son. During her treatment it was felt that she needed skin grafting to heal her wounds. I was to donate skin from my abdomen as well as thigh, so I was being treated for the same. We had slept in the ward of the hospital side by side on two adjacent cots. At night I dreamt that Shri Gurudeo entered the ward, and went to my sister's bed, he blessed her by moving his hand all over her body.

Next day when the doctor came for rounds and for preparations for the skin grafting he removed the bandage and to his surprise the wound which was not at all healing after so much of treatment, was showing signs of healing, and doctor decided not to perform skin grafting. Within a few days of time the entire wound healed on its own.

My sister had also had the same dream, Gurudeo blessed both of us.

In the year 1948; I was staying in Bijapur along with my brother-in-law, Shri B. G. Shirahatti. One fine morning Shri Dadasaheb Chandurkar came to Bijapur and said that Shri Gurudeo had called me to Nimbal. Accordingly I went to Nimbal. On that golden day I was blessed with Divine *Nāma* through Shri Tulpulekaka at the behest of Shri Gurudeo.

My husband and I had gone to Nimbal for Gurudeo's *darshana* in the year 1950. Having appeared for his medical college examinations, my husband was awaiting the results. When Shri Gurudeo was strolling near Nimbal railway station as usual, he saw my husband (V.G. Shirhatti), and said that he (V.G. Shirhatti) had passed his examinations, even before the results were declared. After taking Gurudeo's *darshana* we came back to Bijapur. On the next day we received the news of my husband passing his examinations with flying colours.

In 1951 when Gurudev had come to Belgaum to deliver a lecture at R.P.D. College, he came to our house in Vadagaon Village. He was very pleased to be there, then he performed arati before the photographs of Shri Bhausaheb Maharaj and Shri Amburao Maharaj. We were blessed by his (Gurudeo's) divine presence at our home.

In the year 1954 when we were staying in Kolhapur, sometime in the month of February Shri Gurudeo was to visit Shri Siddagiri Kadasiddeshwar temple. At that time Shri Kotabagi - advocate with some other *Namadharakas* had come to our house. My two daughters, mother-in-law, husband and I wanted to have the darshana of Shri Gurudeo. At that time, I was pregnant for the third time and my due date was approaching very fast. It was first decided that leaving me, all were to go to Shri Siddhagiri, as bus travel was not medically permitted to me and further the roads to Siddhagiri were not in good condition. But I insisted that I would be coming to have Shri Gurudev's Darshana. On my insistence, my husband asked a van driver to take us to Shri Siddhagiri. Despite many problems of the road, the van driver readily came forward to take us to Shri Siddhagiri.

Next day morning after finishing my work I boarded the van with all family members and the Namadharakas who had come to our house. We went to Shri Siddhagiri, had Shri Gurudeo's darshana and blessing. He (Gurudeo) had foreseen that I would give birth to a son. We returned without any problem.

We were happy that we could go to Shri Siddhagiri and had Gurudeo's darshana there. By Gurudeo's blessings I gave birth to a male issue within a few days.

- **Mrs. Shanta V. Shirahatti**
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When we are proceeding along the winding path of spirituality, we have, at times, the unique pleasure of having a glimpse of a unique scenery ahead. Just then, our path takes a turn and the scene goes out of sight, leaving faint memory behind to continue our effort to reach the top.

- Gurudeo Ranade

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Date : 7-2-2003

To
Editor,
Pathway to God
Belgaum - 590 011.

Dear Respected Editor,

Kindly publish the following in your esteemed Journal.

Research Scholars, Ph.Ds, Lecturers in Indian Universities, Colleges and Institutions of Higher learning can apply for admission in the summer school (May 25 to June 15) in Prakrit Language & Literature. Second class Railway return fare to the Institute and back home with free lodging and boarding during the schools is avilable. Apply with your brief resume on a plain paper to the Director, upto April 15, 2003.

With thanks

Your's faithfully
Sd/-
[V. P. Jain]
Director

My Last Prayer

Oh ! The Lord of the Universe,
Being cautioned by my Inner Self,
Of my early exit from this worldly life,
I surrender myself, to enforce Thy will !

Gifted with the Divine Eye,
By the grace of Gurudeo,
I perceive Thy 'Divine Spirit' in every soul,
In the form of 'Cosmic Power', pervading the Universe !

Blind are the people,
As the blindest of the blind could be,
If they cannot perceive Thee,
Who pervades the entire Universe !

Drunk with the wine of Ego Self,
The people tread the path of material pelf,
Not knowing the path of Real Self,
That lies in the knowledge of "Own Self" !

I know, I am only an atom,
Of Thy Omnipotent Power,
And equally so, other human souls,
Regardless of caste, cread or nationality !

My heart bemoans,
At my utter inability,
To lead the humanity in its entirity,
Towards the realm of ultimate Reality !

Hard is the shell of Ego Self,
As hard as an Uncut diamond,
Under which is built Thy golden temple
Flooded with light of Thy blissful Vision !

Bless me Oh ! Lord,
With Thy Omnipotent Power,
To break open the shell of Ego Self,
To render Thy vision perceptible to all !

Lo ! The doors of Thy golden temple,
Are flung open for the entire humanity,
Transforming their dream,
Into one of reality !

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◆◆◆

The unmanifested nature when lit up by the Unmanifested Self produces the objective universe with its different planes, the development determined by the seeds contained in Nature. Only the Divine Self must take hold of it.

- Dr. S. Radhakrishnan

The Most Significant 109 Stanzas Of Jnyaneshwari

Selected, edited and composed by
Swami Swaroopanand of Pawas

(English translation of Original in Marathi)

1. Oh Lord Incarnation of AUMKAR, causal state of the Universe, the source of all beings, the omnipresent, who can only be described by the VEDAS, I salute THEE. Oh ATMAN, discernible only through perception, I offer my prayer to you. (1/1)

2. Oh supreme, you are the Lord Ganesha incarnate, the Lord of intelligence of all beings, kindly listen, implores the humble disciple of Niwrattinatha. (1/2)

3. Now I bow before the evergreen, the everenergetic Goddess SHARADA who is the origin of all forms of art and literature, and beholds the world by her charm. (1/21)

4. My Master who is my preceptor and the benefactor and due to whose teaching I have survived the ocean of this mundane world dwells in my heart. It is due to this reason that I am able to differentiate between good and bad. (1/22).

5. It is only the learned and the evolved ones who fathom the potential divinity in every living being. (2/126)

6. Every living being is mortal, and the one that dies takes rebirth. This cycle keeps moving perennially, like sand through an hourglass. (2/159)

7. Anyone following a beaten track does not normally encounter a risk, like a person who walks with a lamp at night does not stumble. (2/187)

8. Similarly Oh Partha, by discharging one's own duty, success is yours for sure. (2/188)

9. Don't be overjoyous, over a moment of happiness, nor be grief-stricken when sad, and don't you weigh your actions based on loss or gain from these. (2/226)

10. Whilst performing one's own duties religiously, one must remain unmoved whatever comes his way. (2/228)

11. What has been revealed after deep study is, that, one should not give up his duties ordained. (2/265)

12. However, while doing so, don't attach motives to the outcome of your actions nor allow evil designs take you over, but act in good faith dispassionately. (2/266)

13. Oh Arjuna ! Keep your balance and perform your duties, earnestly, in a most detached way. (2/267)

14. However, if the work undertaken by you is accomplished, don't be over delighted. (2/268)

15. Similarly, don't be morose, if it remains incomplete for some reason. (2/269)

16. Should you do all your work in the name of the God, rest assured it will be done without any hitch. (2/271)

17. Therefore, perform your bounden duties, as the time warrants, in a detached manner. (3/78)

18. Remember, one who performs his/her ordained duties sincerely attains liberation. (3/80)

19. 'Duty is worship' following this thumb rule one does

not commit sin. (3/81)

20. However, when one does not discharge the duties cast upon him, and strays from his path, he gets engulfed in the vicious mundane circle. (3/82)

21. Consider your obligatory duties to be your daily oblation and follow it scrupulously, so that, the worldly ties don't shackle you. (3/83)

22. If we accept our chartered duties as the wish of the Almighty, and acquaint ourselves accordingly, He is with us. (18/911)

23. Oh son of Pandu, remember, performance of the duties so devolved on one, is the ultimate service offered to me, the all pervasive. (18/906)

24. Oh brave warrior, the omnipresent is mighty pleased, with the offering of the flowers of one's duty. (18/917)

25. Let all your actions be done in my name, done on my behalf, and be directed towards me from the bottom of your heart. (9/400)

26. And don't let yourself be carried away by the egoistic feeling of the 'doer and the deed' in whatever you do. (3/187)

27. You are welcome to enjoy the life as it comes, provided you are not emotionally involved, or hanker after such enjoyment. (3/188)

28. Make a resolve to remain composed, and let your sensory faculties carry out their duties freely. (3/76)

29. Listen, Oh dexterous Arjuna, having been born in the human form, it is idiotic to condemn, physical actions.

(These being unavoidable.) (3/145)

30. Look, persons like JANAK (the King of the olden times) attained salvation without giving up any of their duties. (3/152)

31. See even those who have reached the point of divinity, and who have no mundane desires, also have a duty to discharge towards the society. (3/155)

32. They have to lead the ignorant; treading the path as prescribed by the religion, through their own example, in the same manner as the blind is led by a person who can see. (3/156)

33. It is so, because, the commoners emulate/follow the footsteps of the visionaries, accepting it as exemplary (3/158)

34. This is precisely why; the savants instead of renouncing their duty should rather follow it more meticulously. (3/159)

35. A person skilled in YOGA, carries out his actions without any attachment in the same manner as the lamp is totally unconcerned about the transactions being carried out in its light (5/49)

36. He does all his duties in a detached way, like a lotus petal/leaf, which does not get wet though in the water. (5/50)

37. Such a person, to my mind, is Brahma incarnate, though people attribute state of happiness and sorrow to him as well, he being in human form. (6/408)

38. He, in fact, remains steadfast, no matter where he is or what he is doing. (13/486)

39. Oh Arjuna ! Equilibrium is the essence of Yoga where mind and brain function in total harmony. (2/273)

40. No worldly miseries bother the person who is in bliss. (2/338)

41. The same way as thirst or hunger are not an impediment for a person whose stomach is a source of elixir/nectar. (2/339)

42. Similarly, sorrow has no place in the heart full of happiness. Mind of such an individual is one with the Supreme. (2/340)

43. Self realized person remains unruffled, like a flame in a vacuum. (2/341)

44. A person who is not weary of work, nor has his eyes set on the fruits there from, (4/103)

45. And whose mind is not polluted or boastful of his plan of work, nor overconfident about its accomplishment. (4/104)

46. And enlightened, who has renounced his desires, is really a Brahma personified. (4/105)

47. Should you be keen to gain that sublime knowledge, you have to surrender to the Saints without any reservation. (4/164)

48. Selfless service, is the threshold of the house of knowledge, secure it through unconditional submission. (4/165)

49. Thereafter, wholeheartedly bow before them, and be in their service without an iota of pride. (4/166)

50. On doing so, they will impart such knowledge, should you seek to know it, which will leave no doubts in

your mind. (4/167)

51. By acquiring that knowledge, you will experience MY omnipresence, including in yourself. (4/169)

52. Oh Partha, enlightened thus, the darkness of your ignorance will disappear, if you have the blessings of your Sadguru. (4/170)

53. Even if you are full of sins, carry Himalayan doubts, or are an ocean of ignorance. (4/171)

54. The strength of this eternal knowledge is such that all these things are insignificant in front of it. (4/172)

55. Sadguru provides only a clue to this, that is within you and it flourishes, as you perceive it yourself. (9/49)

56. See, though smoke is caused by fire, smoke does not hold fire in it. Similarly, though I am the genesis of passions / desires, they don't represent ME. (7/59)

57. Human body is made of five elements, with thread of actions passing through it. It keeps rotating on the wheel of life and death. (13/1103)

58. It is like a small butter ball, in the mouth of an all devouring doom, and it takes as much time to gulp it, as it takes for a fly to flutter its wings. (13/1104)

59. This is the condition of our body, whereas the soul is eternal from eternity. (13/1107)

60. Being formless, it does not carry any characteristics or has physical attributes of bodily form. (13/1108)

61. Self-resplendent, it is not single or many, free or bound and neither happy nor disappointed. (13/1111)

62. Those who have the ability to distinguish between the eternal and the earthly, like the proverbial swan, which

can separate milk from water, are the ones, who unite with the Supreme. (13/1143)

63. Even after being enlightened thus, they do their mundane chores happily, considering the entire living being to be the manifestation of the Supreme. (10/117)

64. For someone who thus becomes one with the Universe, and carries a firm conviction of the entire globe to be his house. (12/213)

65. Oh Partha ! And in spite of being in such a state, one who adores me, I hold him as a crown on my head. (12/214)

66. You may not find me in 'VAIKUNTHA', my heavenly abode, may be, that, you may not be able to trace me in the 'SUN' or even in the 'YOGEES' psyche. (9/207)

67. However, oh son of Pandu, ostensibly thus untraceable, I am sure to be found, at a place, where I am ceaselessly remembered, though chanting of my name. (9/208)

68. Where, Krishna, Vishnu, Hari, Govinda, is being rhythmically chanted continually, besides serious discussion on spiritual knowledge. (9/210)

69. Whose talk, vision, and mind revolve around me and in my thought. (9/445)

70. Whose ears listen only my fame, who feel adored being in my service. (9/446)

71. When compared, I consider them my parallel, even if they are born in a family full of sins or are devoid of learning. (9/449)

72. When once they wholeheartedly place their devotion

in me, their past is history thereafter. (4/457)

73. Like the rivers and the streams which have no separate entity after one they merge with the river Ganges. (9/458)

74. The same way, Kshatriya, Vaishya, women, Shudra, low caste all these distinctions remain till they are not one with me. (9/460)

75. Oh Arjuna ! The so-called distinctions of sinful, Vaishya, Shudra, women all disappear as they reach me through their devotion. (9/474)

76. I do not discriminate based on how any one is placed. I am only concerned about the dedication. I value the devotion. (9/395)

77. Fruits, flowers, or the leaves offered to me are only the means for my prayer, irrespective of these; unadultrated devotion is the keynote for my worship. (9/396)

78. On perceiving my omnipresence, he becomes engrossed in my worship in whatever form and thus becomes foe less. (11/698)

79. The person who perceives my all pervasiveness, is an ace amongst the devotees, and is truly enlightened. (7/136)

80. Remain affectionately engrossed in my worship, with your mind fixed on me and venerate my manifestation in all the forms. (9/517)

81. Extinguish your desires, by concentrating on me. This is the proper way to attain me. (9/518)

82. I confide in you the secret from my heart, that, when you are able to achieve this, you will automatically be

one with ME. (9/519)

83. I swear on my own, that, you will merge in ME when you wholeheartedly submit yourself to me. (8/79)

84. However, if you are unable to surrender to me with your heart, mind and intellect totally unadulterated. (12/104)

85. Then at least spare one moment in the twenty-four hours of the day, to be offered to me, when you are totally with me. (12/105)

86. Those moments when you enjoy my audience you will detest desires. (12/106)

87. As a result, like a full moon, which wanes with each passing day and ultimately disappears, on the night of no moon. (12/108)

88. The same way, your mind dissuaded from desires will be eclipsed by my thought. (12/109)

89. Remember that nothing is difficult, if efforts are made. Therefore, beget me through efforts. (12/113)

90. The peculiar characteristic of human mind is, it is glued to a thing, from which it derives pleasure. Taking this clue, make it perceive spiritual experiences. (6/420)

91. Truant sensory organs can then be brought under mind control, whereupon, mind is united, with the life force, which then merges with the space element. (6/460)

92. Efforts can make this Yogic feat a second nature, making bliss yours for asking. (6/461)

93. A person who has won over his desires, anger, and passions in this fashion, gets the advantage of this Yoga. (16/444)

94. Look dear ! 'AUM TAT SAT', chanting a group of these three words will lead you to the origin of light, the beginning of all the beings. (17/401)

95. Oh Dhananjaya ! As an ornament to the gold, or a wave to the water, you are not distinct from me. Realizing this, be one with me. (18/1400)

96. Worship me without the feeling of duality, recognizing that, the micro being in you is a part and parcel of my macro existence. (18/1405)

97. The secret of this path can only be disclosed to those who have purity of mind, clarity of thought; are nor prejudiced and are totally devoted to their Sadguru. (9/40)

98. I find that, these virtues are imbibed in you, Therefore, I shall not hide it from you. (9/41)

99. One who explains this sum and substance of 'GEETA' to my devotees in a way as a misplaced child is brought to his mother. (18/1512)

100. He will be one with me on his demise. (18/1513)

101. Thus said the omnipotent, the omnieyed, the omnipresent Lord Srikrishna. (18/1417)

102. This is an unspoken communication, it is to be perceived, and it explains the secret without utterance. (1/58)

103. This is what the austere desire to know. This is what brings bliss to the saints, who due to their skill in practicing SO'HAM, experience it. (1/53)

104. This is the essence of all the scriptures, which is widely known as the 'GEETA', and knowledge of which brings about self-realization as easily as one can see a pearl

on his palm. (18/1323)

105. Like a calf becomes the cause for getting milk to the entire household, the same way, son of Pandu became the cause for benediction of the whole world. (18/1467)

106. Oh the God of the Universe, now be happy with the service of this epic and bless me thus. (18/1793)

107. Let the crooked ones give up their crookedness and be interested in good things. Let all beings foster mutual love. (18/1794)

108. At that juncture, the Lord of the Universe, his Master (Saguaro), said 'BE IT SO'. The blessings made Saint Jnyandeva very happy. (18/1831)

109. Saint Jnyandeva says, he is offering this garland of flowers of his random sublime thoughts, at the feet of the all pervasive. (11/708)

'HARI AUM TAT SAT ! HARI AUM TAT SAT !!

(The Marathi text is available for daily recitation)

- Madhav Ranade
"Swaroop Sawalee"
28/259, Pradhikaran, Nigadi
PUNE - 400 044.

◆◆◆

NOTE : Swamijee's literature and cassets of Abhangas available at :

1) Swami Swaroopanand Sewa Mandal, Pawas, Dist. Ratnagiri - 415 616.

2) Desai Bandhu Ambewale, 1483, Shukrawar Peth, Near Shanipar, Pune - 411 002.

Faith (श्रद्धा)

Faith plays a big part in moulding a person. Faith is generated from trust in ourselves that we can achieve the goal we set for us. Faith creates perseverance that rules out delay. Faith is the foundation on which one has to build the structure of one's achievement. Bhagwan Shrikrishna mentions three types of faith namely (1) Sattvic (based on virtuous merit), (2) Rājasic (arising out of desires and passions), (3) Tāmasic (arising out of sloth and erroneous notions). Faith takes shape according to the inherent nature of the person. Shrikrishna says "श्रद्धामयोऽयं पुरूषो यो यच्छद्धंःस एव सः" (man is formed out of his faith and faith thus determines his form). He indicates that the Sattvic worship gods, the Rajasic, Yakshas and Rakshashas and Tamasic the dead and the ghosts.

Saint Dnyaneshwar says that the whole world is moulded out of faith (Dnyaneshwari of Sonopant Dandekar 17.72). Even then, one should follow the Sattvic faith and not the other two which are harmful to our character and career. The Sattvic do not create a false mountain of difficulties out of the ideas of liberation and realisation, eventhough he may not be a very learned person, nor a studious critic of Brahma Sutras, because he adopts the simple method of moulding his behaviour and career as per the edicts of scriptures without weaving wordy ensnaring webs of his imagination which are not of use at all to reach one's goal. Dnyaneshwari says similar things about the importance of Sattvic faith.

The great saints of Karnatak and Gurudeo Ranade's Guru, Shri Umadikar Maharaj had not studied Sanskrit language, but could see the vision of God directly before their eyes constantly and thus called as "Samarth". He used to say that he does not know the grammar or words from the dictionary. But his Guru resides in his heart with his blessings (ref. Nityanemavali, preface page 18, published by Gurudeo Mandir, Belgaum). Thus faith grows out of self confidence of one's inner being. When saint Tukaram says "The real meaning of vedas is known to us only. Others only carry the load of books", it is meant that they have realised and experienced the essence of Upanishads, though they may not have read the Sanskrit Upanishads. The essential gist of the vedas is stored in their hearts, though they have not read any words therefrom. Faith generates direct experience and from experience faith grows still further.

The question is "how and when" the faith gets created in oneself ? Saibaba used to give the advice of faith and patience "Have faith and wait with patience" he would say. If we sow the seed of the mango tree, we do not rake it out every day to see whether it has sprouted. Once we have sown the seed and the water, manure etc. is taken care of, one has to wait with patience till the sprout comes out of ground to be seen by all. The same thing was said by Swami Samarth of Akkalkot in his own words (according to his biographers) ''The impatient one is shallow. The patient one is sincere'', ''The impatient husband puts his turban not on his head but on his knee''. (Biography of Swami by late Shri Ganesh Ballal Mulekar page 62, edition 7)

Gurudeo Ranade, while explaining that experience does not immediately follow the getting of the 'Name', would say ''It will take its own time''. Once, looking at dried grass he said ''we cannot make it green. When the season changes, it will turn green on its own''. One needs patience and waiting for the fruition of the efforts. Saint Tukaram puts the same thing in his own words ''Haste will not work. The proper time has to elapse''. Faith and patience are as if twin sisters. Doubt and inconsistency are not conducive to faith.

Saint Samarth Ramdas says ''make it a rule to utter something like 'Shriram Jayaram Jaya Jaya Ram' regularly. Your inner being will do the rest.'' In the tenth chapter ''Vibhooti Yoga'' of Bhagwadgeeta, Shrikrishna says ''I am the japa yadna amongst the yadnas'', thus emphasizing the superiority of Japa-yadna, Shrikrishna further says ''Man with faith attains knowledge'' and ''the ignorant without faith which means one filled with doubts doesn't reach anywhere''. (श्रद्धावान् लभते ज्ञानम् । अज्ञश्चाश्रद्दधानश्च संशयात्मा विनश्यति ॥ 4.39 and 4.40). Faith is essential not only in spirituality but also in ordinary dealings. When we are travelling in a train or a long distance bus we do keep faith in the driver and sleep with ease, till the destination is reached and we get down. The same way, we keep faith in the doctor who treats us and gives medicines, and we faithfully hope for a cure. Beedkar Maharaj of Samarth Sampradaya used to emphasize on trust, determination and faith most of all things, apart from firmly facing the difficulties that might arise in our efforts. He used to say "God responds in the measure of your determination". "The way you sing, the tune is played accordingly". (Biography of Beedkar Maharaj by La. Ga. Bapat 1970 page 246). If the disciple does not follow the path shown by the Guru, he may not reach the destination. This is the undeniable truth. One has to tread the path with faith. If one worships God in the form of a stone, water or any thing, the faith still grows and the divine principle intervenes to end the duality between the worshiper and worshiped i.e. the devotee and the God and efforts reach fruition. Maharaj used say that our own mind realises us. That God came out of the pillar like Narasinha for Prahlad or waited at door step for Pundaleek etc. are but instances of the firm faith of the devotees in their worshipped God. The God hasn't changed from their yesterday to our today. What has changed is the firmness of the faith.

It is general experience that creation of faith is difficult; if it gets created, consistency is difficult due to may be illness, family difficulties, death of a loved one etc. Therefore, Samarth Ramdas Swami has told one should be on guard against happenings that may not be to our liking but tend to unsettle our faith. Whatever God arranges should be taken as acceptable to us. Our wishes should not be allowed to create distance between us and Him. One should behave as God desires, whatever he does should be accepted by us, then the God who is most compassionate will condescend to bless us. The devotee should be always aware of this thing and mould himself to protect one's faith and equanimity.

Once Gurudeo Ranade was invited as a chief guest for a function at Parashrambhau High School in Jamakhandi. When he was at Miraj station for departure, he got the sad news of his son's demise. But he went ahead finished the function and returned home and showed the telegram to his friend and said "God gave him to me. God has now taken him away from me. Long live God's name". Bible also says "God hath given, God hath taken away, Blessed be the name of Lord".

Saint Tukaram has said "My wife died, God has relieved me of the affection. Oh Vithoba, now we two rule our world. There is no purpose for any one else. The child died. So far so good. God has saved me from another affection. The mother died, and Tukaram says the worry has gone".

(Govt. publication Stanza 778)

Saint Kabeer says "Know the God whom you worship very well" so that there is no doubtfulness in the faith in him. Most of the people lose faith in God, the moment the circumstances of life go against their wishes. Those who are firm in belief and determined in their faith in God, go from darkness to light and reach realisation. Once, one devotee sent a note to Swami Swaroopanand writing on it what is devotion ? The Swami's answer was (1) unlimited faith in the existence of God and (2) to say to

God "you are the only refuge" and the firm belief that there is nothing without God. A young man who was psychologically not at ease, wrote to Swami Swaroopanand that he has not seen God. How he can believe in सोहं that is I am Himself ? How to deny the pain and pleasure he experiences and if I am Him, how the pain and pleasure affect him ? The Swami replied "My boy, सोहं or I am Him is the power of the mind. If I meditate on it, my present Karma, the karma accumulated through all the previous births, the present working Karma and its effects and the cycle thus generated gradually disappears and what remains is the pure divine realisation. Nothing else remains. Therefore the only truth is "you are the Supreme Self". When the boy still persisted with his querry whether all this is possible through "Soham", the Swami referred to what is said by Dnyaneshwar that if you have doubt, give it due thoughtful consideration to come to a conclusion and then you can be angry with me if your experience is otherwise. The above conversation is a nice instance of how the knowledgeable persons deal with the problem of faith and even create faith in non-believers. Samarth Ramdas Swami says that all agree that there is nothing without God but their faith is only an outward expression. It does not arise from the inner being. It is only a coventional talk. Ramkrishna Paramhans used to beseach the Goddess that he does not want wealth, nor honour nor any pleasures, but "only show me your divine vision". He used to yearn for the same. Once he wanted to end his life with the sword in temple worship room, but then he saw her resplendent vision before he could do something like that. After this incident he used to see the different forms of the Goddess. While offering the food to the Goddess, he would see that rays would come out of her eyes, touch all the food articles and again go back to the eyes and disappear. He used to touch her nose & feel the breathing. When he was alone in his room, he would hear the sound of her anklets while she would go swiftly like a young girl up the stairs. When he would come out to see whether it is really so, he would see her standing with her hair free on her back and herself looking towards the Ganges river. (Biography of Saints by K.V. Belsare 1989 page 189). Ramakrishna Paramhansa who had the greatest of spiritual experiences, used to give highest importance to faith in God. Constant devotion with faith was the landmark of Gurudeo Ranade.

The common man is disturbed by a number of doubts described in detail by Prof. K.V. Belsare. Whether on meditating on the Vastu (वस्तु) one can obtain the same. How can one attain God just by japa of the name ? Thousands of people do japa on the name but do not see God, which means there must he something else other than the name to give effect to attainment. If Prarabdha Karma is unavoidable, then is it necessary to take the name of God ? Taking, the name of God might be only the primary stage. Faith and doubt are contrary to each other. If the doubt becomes strong, the faith becomes weak and mind loses the concentration. Prof. Belsare says that the origin of doubt is in one's affection to the body. When this affection weakens the doubts disappear and faith grows stronger (Anand Sadhana, 1997, Page 97).

The effort is certainly to be done by the individual himself. If we are able to reduce the desire, faith and concentration increase and one progresses towards the attainment through direct experiences.

Gulabrao Maharaj, the blind but very learned saint was once asked by a lady as her difficulty "I cannot put my mind in the service of my husband. Is there any remedy ?" He said I could only tell her "Have faith and be firm", he said he was happy she did n't ask any further doubts which would have put him in embarassment. Man has to make his own effort for progress of the mind. Nothing else will help. To make the mind willing, one has to concentrate on what the westerners call the subconscious mind. When the external mind is busy one is not aware of the subconscious mind, which however does not stop its work of registering in the memory the important impressions it gets even when we are not aware of the same. The external mind is engaged in thoughts and imaginations but the subconscious mind is open to emotion, sentiment and faith. It is the source of intuition and inspiration. When the external mind is made to form a regulated habit, it penetrates deeper into the subconscious mind and becomes a part of the nature. Japa on a name is a sort of auto suggestion to form a belief in faith and devotion to God, that God is the only refuge and protector and his blessings are always with us. Once the subconscious mind takes over the reins, one doesn't have to bother.Therefore, Ramadas Swami addresses directly to the mind and not the individual as such, with his advice on how to behave.

Whatever be it, one has to continue ceaselessly with faith and determination and increase the duration of japa. So much that, as Samarth Ramdas Swami said, the Sneeze and cough has wasted the time, which was a break in the japa period. When the feeling thus becomes intense, the Supreme Being which is also in our Self, comes into full vision and realisation is achieved.

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(Rendered in English from original Marathi by P. D. Dharwarkar)

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> *I find solace in the Bhagwadgeeta that I miss even in Sermon on the Mount. When disappointment stares me in the face and all alone I see not a ray of light, I go back to the Bhagwadgeeta. I find a verse here and a verse there and I immediately begin to smile in the midst of overwhelming tragedies and my life has been full of external tragedies - and if they have left no visible, no indelible scar on me, I owe it all to the teachings of Bhagwadgeeta.*
>
> *- Mahatma Gandhi.*
> *[in Young India (1925)]*

Śankarācārya's Laghu-vākya-vṛitti

The fact that even in the waking condition, bodha alone underlies knowledge is again emphasised in the next verse.

(५)

जागरेऽपि धियस्तूष्णीभाव: शुद्धेन भास्यते ।
धी-व्यापाराश्च चिद्भास्याश्चिदाभासेन संयुता: ।।५ ।।

Even in the waking state, the inactivity of the intellect is illumined by the pure (bodha). The activity i.e. thoughts in the intellect fit to be illumined by sentience are associated with or accompanied by cidābhāsa (5).

Explanation :- In the waking state, generally the gross body, senses, and the inner organ (mind, intellect) are active. But sometimes, even in this state, the mind-intellect complex being engrossed in something else becomes inactive or neutral and then is not able to know the external things, etc. Due to inattentiveness, the mind is not able to cognise things. But this inactivity or inattentiveness (tūṣṇīmbhāva) is illumined by pure sentience, i.e. this peculiar condition of mind-intellect even in the waking state is illumined by pure bodha / Inner self. Really speaking, the intellect is non-sentient, in it there is the reflection of bodha, the sentience. Thus the intellect gets united with the reflection of the sentience (cidābhāsa). And though in the waking condition, the ċidābhāsa is supposed to be the knower, it is not actually so. The question then is : who is the illuminator of thoughts in the intellect ? The reply is :- all thoughts are illumined by pure sentience. Hence it is said in this verse that the thoughts i.e. the activities of the intellect united with the reflection of the sentience are illumined by pure sentience (ċit) alone.

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The question then is : How is it that in wordly life, one says that the intellect knows ? This question is answered in the next stanza No. 6.

(६)

वन्हिन-तप्त-जलं ताप-युक्तं देहस्य तापकम् ।
चिद्भास्या धीस्तदाभासयुक्तान्यं भासयेत् तथा ॥६॥

Just as water heated by fire becomes united with heat (of the fire) and then makes the body hot, so also the intellect illuminated by sentience becomes united with the reflection of that sentience, and (then) illumines other things. (6)

Explanation :- A question can be raised here :- If the activities of the intellect are illuminated by sentience (see verse No. 5), then what is the point in saying that the intellect does the act of knowing ? This question is answered, in this verse, with an example. Water in itself is[25] cool; coolness is the nature of water. But when it comes in contact with fire it becomes hot. Then if this hot water is touched by us or is poured on our body or falls on our body, it scorches our body or makes our body hot.

(Another example is :- The mirror in itself cannot illumine anything. But when the rays of the sun fall on it, the reflection of the sunlight can illumine other objects). In a similar way, the intellect in itself is non-sentient. But when there is reflection of sentience in it, it with the reflected light of the sentience (ċidābhāsa) illumines other things. And then we wrongly think that the intellect is illumining other things, that it is knowing other things. So there is nothing wrong in saying that the activities of the intellect are illumined by sentience only. Thus sentience alone is illuminator.

• • •

(७)

रूपादौ गुण-दोषादि-विकल्पा: बुद्धिगा: क्रिया: ।
ता: क्रिया विषयै: सार्धं भासयंती चितिर्मता ॥७॥

Thoughts about the good and bad qualities, etc. of the objects like Form, etc. are the activities taking place in the intellect. It is regarded (in the philosophy of Monism alone) that the sentience alone is responsible to illuminate those activities (of the intellect) along with the objects (like Form, etc) (7).

Explanation :- Form, Sound, Touch, taste and smell are the five objects of knowledge. The mind-intellect comes in contact with them via the sense-organs. Then in the intellect/mind arise some reactions / activities / thoughts about the good and bad aspects of those objects such as :- some objects are good, some are bad, some things give pleasure, other give pain, some are fit to be taken and others are fit to be abandoned, and so on. The mind /

intellect non-sentient in itself cannot know all this. But the sentience / Inner Self is that which illumines those thoughts along with their objects. The word 'vikalpa' in Sanskrit has many meanings. Śaṅkarācārya uses that word, in this work, in the sense of activities of the intellect / mind (dhī-vyāpāra. see Verse No. 5) i.e. in the sense of the word vikalpa in the sentence Saṅkalpa - vikalpātmakaṁ manaḥ.

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(८)

रूपाद्य गुणदोषाभ्यां विविक्ता केवला चितिः ।
सैवानुर्तते रूपरसादीनां विकल्पने ॥८॥

The sentience in itself is altogether different from the (object) Form, and (its) good and bad qualities. And that sentience alone underlies or accompanies the thoughts about (objects like) Form, Taste, etc. (8).

Explanation :- The sentience alone is different from objects like Form, Taste, Sound, etc. and their good aspects as well as faults. Yet whatever thoughts about them appear in the mind-intellect are illumined by sentience alone. Sentience is that which underlies or accompanies all thoughts in the intellect. Just as water underlies bubbles, foam, etc., so also the sentience is at the basis of the knowledge of thoughts and their objects like Form, Taste, etc.

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(९)

क्षणे क्षणेऽन्यथाभूता धीविक्लपाश्चितिर्न तु ।
मुक्तासुसूत्रवद् बुद्धि-विकल्पेषु चितिस्तथा ॥९॥

The thoughts in the intellect change at each and every moment; on the contrary the sentience does not (change). Just as in a necklace of pearls, the string is inside (all) the pearls, so also the sentience is associated with or underlies (all) thoughts in the intellect (9).

Explanation :- Pure Sentience / Inner Self / Brahman alone is without any change, modification or motion, while everything else is subject to change. Naturally the intellect is changing every moment and thoughts in the intellect are also changing per moment. On the other hand, the Sentience that underlies the thoughts never changes; it remains as it is without any modification. This point is here illustrated with the example of a pearl-string. In a necklace of Pearls, there are many pearls and they can move side ways; but the string that passes through every pearl is one and remains without any change. Likewise the Sentence without undergoing any change / modification lies at the basis of the changing thoughts.

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NOTES :

25 शैत्यं हि यत् सा प्रकृतिर्जलस्य ।

26 The printed text reads ईक्षते which is a misprint for ईक्ष्यते (= is seen / observed).

27 श्रद्धा नाम गुरू-वेदान्त-वाक्येषु अनीव विश्वासः / आत्मानात्मविवेक, ३२.

28 एवं आत्मानि अविद्यातः देहाध्यासो हि जायते । अपरोक्षानुभूति, ८७.

(To be continued)

Prof. **Dr. K.V. Apte**

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Sangli - 416 415

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Activities of A.C.P.R.

Quarterly Report for the period ending 31-03-2003.

I) LECTURES HELD FROM 1-1-2003 to 31-3-2003. IN A.C.P.R.

Date	Name of the Guest	Topic
04-01-2003	Sri. Prabhakar G. Kulkarni Shahapur, Belgaum.	"Sanathan Dharma"
11-01-2003	Sou. Manik Bengeri, Mysore.	"Jeevanat Sadhaneche Mahatva"
25-01-2003	Sri. Dashrath B. Hasbe, Belgaum.	"Sanatan Dharma and Shri Shri Thakur Anukul Chandra's Devine teachings"
15-02-2003	Sri. Dashrath B. Hasbe, Belgaum.	"Yugpurushottam Shri Shri Thakur Anukul Chandra Yanche Nam Sankirtan Va Vanshgati Vidnyan"
22-02-2003	Sri. Prabhakar Kulkarni Vadgaon, Belgaum.	"Chidamber Ani Vithoba ya Avtaranchi Manavana Shikvan'

II. We welcome the following new Subscribers to Pathway to God Journal.

1. Sri. Subramanya Bhat, Belgaum. 2. Sri. S.S. Patil, Dharwad. 3. Sri. Sameer Huilgol, Dharwad. 4. Sri. B. Dasarathi, Hubli. 5. Smt. Shakuntala S. Bijapur, Hubli. 6. Sri. G. Chalapati, Bangalore. 7. Sri. R.N. Vasudev, Bangalore.

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III. We thank following donors :

1. Prof. Dr. K.V. Apte, Sangli	300-00
2. Lions Club of Saheli, Belgaum	500-00
3. Sri. Ratnakar B. Desai, Belgaum	25,000-00
TOTAL	25,800-00

Belgaum.
Date : 31-3-2003

- M. B. Zirali
Secretary A.C.P.R. Belgaum

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The continued article, 'The True Yoga' by P.D. Dharwarkar will be published in the next issue.

- Editor

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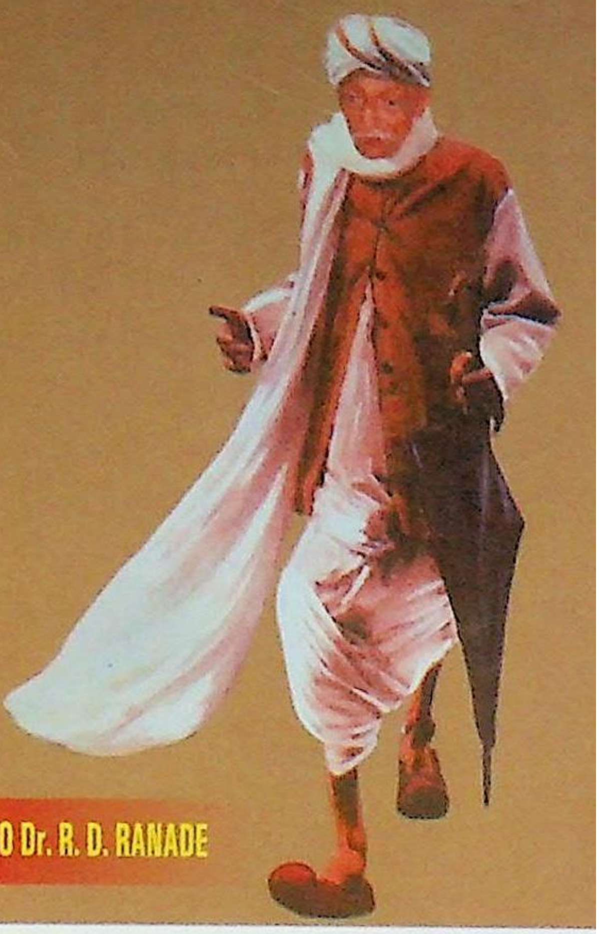

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